

Guerrilla Veterans in Post-War Zimbabwe

Symbolic and Violent Politics, 1980–1987

Norma J. Kriger



PUBLISHED BY THE PRESS SYNDICATE OF THE UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE
The Pitt Building, Trumpington Street, Cambridge CB2 1RP, United Kingdom

CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

The Edinburgh Building, Cambridge, CB2 2RU, UK
40 West 20th Street, New York, NY 10011-4211, USA
477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia
Ruiz de Alarcón 13, 28014 Madrid, Spain
Dock House, The Waterfront, Cape Town 8001, South Africa

<http://www.cambridge.org>

© Norma Kriger 2003

This book is in copyright. Subject to statutory exception
and to the provisions of relevant collective licensing agreements,
no reproduction of any part may take place without
the written permission of Cambridge University Press.

First published 2003

Printed in the United Kingdom at the University Press, Cambridge

Typeface Times 10/12 pt *System* L^AT_EX 2_ε [TB]

A catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library

ISBN 0 521 81823 0 hardback

ISBN 0 521 53770 3 African paperback edition

Contents

<i>List of tables</i>	page x
<i>Acknowledgments</i>	xi
<i>Chronology (1889–1980)</i>	xiii
<i>List of abbreviations</i>	xviii
<i>Map</i>	xx
1 Introduction	1
2 The peace settlement	35
3 The assembly phase	67
4 Military integration	104
5 Employment programs for the demobilized	141
6 Conclusion	185
<i>Epilogue: the past in the present</i>	191
<i>Appendix: The ruling party's attempts to withdraw ex-combatants' special status and ex-combatants' responses, 1988–1997</i>	209
<i>Notes</i>	215
<i>References</i>	269
<i>List of pseudonyms used in the text</i>	284
<i>Index</i>	285

Tables

1 Statistical profile of assembly point personnel	<i>page</i> 93
2 Categorization of Danhiko students, 1990	183
3 Perpetrators by province	194

1 Introduction

This study examines the construction of a new political order in Zimbabwe through the prism of veterans of the war of liberation. My previous work, *Zimbabwe's Guerrilla War: Peasant Voices*, focused exclusively on rural people's experiences of the guerrilla war.¹ I remained curious about the guerrillas because I knew them only through the accounts of rural people in which they figured as both benefactors and brutal bullies. My interest was further piqued by what seemed a puzzle. On the one hand, the image of the guerrillas in the Zimbabwe media, especially from 1988 when their voices first became prominent in the public arena, was of "forgotten and neglected heroes" of the liberation war. On the other hand, political actors, including the regime and the former guerrillas themselves, consistently invoked their war credentials to legitimate their claims. How, I wondered, could a regime which based its legitimacy on the war of liberation treat the liberators so scandalously?

The puzzle of revered but neglected ex-combatants, this study will argue, was a manifestation of internal politics. The veterans' lament that they were ignored and forgotten war heroes was both an important symbolic resource and a strategy to seek privileged access to state resources. Moreover, veterans' claims to have been forgotten concealed how those who belonged to the ruling party had already benefited, often at the expense of guerrilla veterans of a minority party. The ruling party's symbolic appeals to the war originated in its need to build power and legitimacy following the grim legacy of the peace settlement. Appeals to the liberation war as well as intimidation and violence were crucial resources for veterans and the ruling party as they collaborated and engaged in conflict with each other in pursuit of their agendas. This dynamic between war veterans and the ruling party persists in contemporary Zimbabwe. The party and veterans manipulate each other, quarrel and cooperate, and draw on a war discourse and violence to advance their agendas.

When I began this study of guerrilla veterans, there was no obviously relevant body of literature. Today, some ten years later, ending civil wars and rebuilding war-torn societies, collectively known as peace-building, are established international policy and scholarly concerns. More specifically, peace-building refers to operations that aim to prevent violence from reigniting after the initial

termination of hostilities – demilitarization, the control of small arms, institutional reform, improved police and judicial systems, the monitoring of human rights, electoral reform, and social and economic development.² As one commentator observed: “Peacebuilding is in effect an enormous experiment in social engineering – an experiment that involves transplanting Western models of social, political, and economic organization into war-shattered states in order to control civil conflict: in other words, pacification through political and economic liberalization.”³

A product of the post-Cold War era, academic and policy interest in peace-building reflects at least two major changes. First, so-called intrastate or internal wars, comprising over 80 percent of all wars and casualties since the end of World War II, rose noticeably after the end of the Cold War.⁴ Second, no longer divided by superpower rivalries, the United Nations (UN) Security Council approved UN peacekeeping operations in these internal wars. Between 1988 and 1995, the UN established twenty-five peacekeeping operations compared with only thirteen in the preceding forty or so years of its existence.⁵ In the 1990s, the major sites of peace-building, as for civil wars, have been on the periphery of the international system – Namibia, Mozambique, Nicaragua, El Salvador, Cambodia, Angola – but also in Bosnia and parts of the former Soviet Union.⁶ International relations scholars whose main staple had been interstate war and superpower rivalries also shifted their attention to internal wars.⁷

Indicators of the spectacular growth of interest in peace-building include donor-sponsored research, new scholarly publications and specializations, and shifting aid patterns. In 1992 then UN Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali first identified peace-building as a UN priority and coined the term “post-conflict peace-building.” The UN Research Institute for Social Development has a War Torn Societies Project on “post-conflict,”⁸ the UN Institute for Disarmament Research had a Disarmament and Conflict Resolution Project on demobilization, disarmament, and the proliferation and control of small arms after intrastate conflict,⁹ and UNESCO has a Culture of Peace program.¹⁰ The International Labor Organization is concerned with employment and training aspects related to ex-combatants’ reintegration.¹¹ The World Bank produced influential studies of demobilization and reintegration in 1993 and 1996, and in 1995, James Wolfensohn, its president, declared that a Bank priority was to anticipate and organize for “post-conflict” economic development programs.¹² In 1997 the World Bank established a Post-Conflict Unit within the Social Development Department and a Post-Conflict Fund.¹³ Think tanks and research institutes have climbed on the bandwagon too. The Peace Research Institute in Oslo directed a two-year collaborative project, Disarming Ethnic Guerrillas.¹⁴ The Bonn International Conversion Center sponsors studies of demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.¹⁵ For scholars, the rising significance of peace-building may be measured by the proliferation of new

specialized journals, such as *Civil Wars*, *International Peacekeeping*, *Global Governance*, *Journal of Peace and Development*, *Small Wars and Insurgencies*, and academic posts for specialists in civil wars, post-conflict studies, and peace studies. The structure and size of international aid also reflects the new concern with war termination and post-war reconstruction. In 1994 total foreign aid to victims of internal wars reached an annual high of \$7.2 billion.¹⁶ By 1996, emergency relief assistance had increased to 10 percent of global official development assistance and one-half of the UN aid budget at a time of shrinking aid budgets.¹⁷

Peace-building is widely seen as made up of two phases. Studies of war-to-peace transitions focus on the first phase of peace-building. This covers negotiated settlements and/or settlements imposed through military victory.¹⁸ The “typical” post-Cold War settlement focuses on combatants, providing for full or partial demobilization, disarmament, and military integration. Reluctant donors and non-government organizations (NGOs) were pushed to broaden the recipients of their assistance from refugees and internally displaced people to include former combatants.¹⁹ The second phase of peace-building is referred to as the post-transition or peace consolidation phase. It begins after the implementation of the settlement, whether imposed or negotiated, and entails continuing efforts started during the transition to reform political institutions and the security sector and to pursue economic and social recovery, development, and change. Peace consolidation includes the reintegration of ex-combatants and other war-affected groups.²⁰ Indeed, studies of demobilization and reintegration programs, which typically cut across the first and second peace-building phases, conceive of reintegration and demobilization as essential for peace-building.²¹ Peace-building studies, above all, seek to identify the conditions, determinants, or strategies for successful peace-building.²² Consequently, the literature is evaluative and prescriptive.

This book shares common terrain with, but also departs from, peace-building studies. Concerned with the peace settlement which formally terminated the guerrilla war for political independence and with programs for the disarmament, demobilization, and reintegration (military and civilian) of ex-combatants, the book covers the familiar turf of studies of transition and peace consolidation. Its main point of departure from peace-building studies arises from its lack of interest in the conditions, determinants, or strategies of successful peace-building. Hence there is no attempt in this study to evaluate the success of the settlement or ex-combatants’ reintegration. Indeed, this study seeks to demonstrate how the evaluative orientation in peace-building studies is an obstacle to understanding the politics and outcomes of settlements and ex-combatant programs. Another difference is that while the peace-building literatures are preoccupied chiefly with the role of external actors, this study is concerned primarily with domestic political actors.

The study is organized around three major questions. First, how did the legacy of the settlement which formally terminated the guerrilla war for political independence shape post-war politics? Second, what strategies, resources, and agendas characterized the relationship of the war veterans and the ruling party after formal independence? Third, what were the political outcomes of their engagement for the ruling party, the veterans, and the society more generally? Insofar as this study focuses on actors' resources, agendas, and strategies, its approach is similar to recent work on post-Cold War civil wars or "new" wars.²³

I argue that the peace settlement was a harbinger of continued armed conflict and set the stage for the politics of guerrillas' incorporation. The settlement had left intact and legitimated three rival armies – the Rhodesian forces and the two guerrilla armies, ZANLA and ZIPRA, which had fought for independence but also battled each other. It had also left undisturbed the Rhodesian-controlled bureaucracy and a white-controlled private sector whose African managers and workers were also deemed loyal to the Rhodesians. To build and legitimate power, the ruling party turned to the already powerful guerrillas and to symbolic appeals to the liberation war. At first, official programs treated both guerrilla armies equally. But the ruling party, ZANU(PF), and its ZANLA guerrillas could not conceal their preference for building power on an exclusively ZANLA guerrilla base and for using only ZANLA's guerrilla struggle for legitimacy. Between 1980 and 1987, the new regime sanctioned and instigated violence and intimidation in collaboration with ZANLA ex-combatants as they both sought power in the army, the civil service, the private sector, and cooperatives. Both also used symbolic appeals to the war of liberation to justify their actions. By 1987 ZANU(PF) had consolidated its power. For their part, ZANLA guerrillas had won privileged access to resources. Among the ex-guerrillas of both armies, though, there was a sense of victimization, discrimination, and neglect by society and the party rather than privilege. Whether colluding or clashing with the ruling party, the guerrillas appealed to their war contributions to justify their quest for power and privilege. The outcome of this dynamic between the ruling party and its guerrilla veterans was a new violent and extractive political order. At the very least, the perpetrators of violence and the beneficiaries of extraction differed from those of the colonial period.

The argument I am making shares much in common with Frederick Cooper's discussion of how African labor in the 1940s and 1950s used successfully the French and British colonial governments' legitimating discourse of them being "industrial men" to justify their own demands for European wages and standards for labor conditions. After independence, when the independent African governments ceased to participate in this discourse, the dynamic of ever-expanding benefits gradually ceased.²⁴ There is a parallel in the Zimbabwe study. Guerrilla

veterans were labeled “soldiers.” Both the settlement and the new regime endorsed the idea of the guerrillas as “soldiers” even though the constitution acknowledged the Rhodesian armed forces as being in charge of law and order. Guerrilla veterans often made successful use of the new regime’s legitimating discourse of them being “soldiers” to justify their own demands for the salaries and benefits accorded Europeans in the former Rhodesian army. In addition, guerrilla veterans used with some success the regime’s legitimating discourse about rewards for war sacrifices to justify their own demands for state benefits. At the time of writing, the war discourse and the cycle of expanding guerrilla veterans’ benefits persist. The ruling party and veterans invoke their war sacrifices and war goals to legitimate their continued struggle for economic justice, including the right to take white-owned land without compensation. Though the chief opposition party rejects rewarding war sacrifices, it invokes the war of liberation to justify its struggle for democratization.

The findings of this study contribute to a revisionist interpretation of Zimbabwe’s “peace-building” experiences and draw attention to inherent limitations in peace-building studies more generally. Studies of Zimbabwe’s settlement celebrated the political transition in 1980 as a triumph. Studies of military integration lauded its success whereas studies of integration programs for the demobilized tended to deplore their failure. Focused on evaluations in terms of subjective peace-building measures, these studies missed how the settlement set the stage for subsequent violent conflict and how veterans’ programs were characterized by a central political dynamic in which the ruling party and its liberation war veterans collaborated to establish power and privilege in ways that built a violent and extractive political order. The Zimbabwe study highlights how the orientation in peace-building studies toward evaluation in terms of externally imposed criteria produces unreliable evaluations and misses how settlements, politics, and power agendas may shape political outcomes antithetical to peace-building.

The limits of peace-building studies

The discourse of peace-building used by international organizations and NGOs has permeated the academic literature on peace-building.²⁵ The most trenchant critiques of the peace-building discourse have come from students of the dynamics of “new” wars.²⁶ They portray these conflicts as posing particular challenges for international actors engaged in war termination and reconstruction. In “old” wars, such as the anti-colonial struggles for independence, the contending sides were reasonably cohesive and well disciplined, the rebels’ goals were to capture and transform the state, and war termination was unambiguous. In contrast, “new” wars occur in the post-Cold War period in conditions

of rapid globalization and in weak states that lack efficacy and legitimacy. The warring actors engage in violence less to win or retain state power than to satisfy immediate and local security, psychological, and economic agendas. Leaders have limited control over their unpaid or under-paid fighting forces; military opponents often collude with each other to advance their economic interests; and regional and international economic networks help to sustain violent conflict and its beneficiaries. The structures and relationships that make it possible for some elites and non-elites to secure profit, protection, and power through violence persist after peace operations, underscoring how war and peace are not discrete events. Analysts of “new” wars point to the need for outside actors to recognize these special features of contemporary warfare if they are to terminate wars and reconstruct states and societies.

The portrait of Zimbabwe’s war and post-war politics in this volume suggests that the differences between “old” and “new” wars are overstated. This chapter will draw attention to collaboration and violent contestation between and within the African nationalist movements, thus underscoring the limits of ideological cohesion and leadership control. Elsewhere I argued that rebel violence in Zimbabwe’s war of independence served not just to win state power but also to advance local and immediate purposes, such as youths’ power against elders, women’s quest to end marital violence, non-ruling lineages’ resentments toward chiefly lineages, and youths’ and guerrillas’ extraction of resources from civilians.²⁷ Moreover, this study shows that the transition, despite its much-heralded success, did not mark an identifiable break between war and peace. After independence, the elite and the guerrilla veterans who fought under the banner of state transformation often used violence and the fact of their war participation to demand and legitimate their privileged access to state resources. These dynamics of an anti-colonial war and post-war politics have some commonalities with “new” wars.

The critique of peace-building studies in this chapter is distinctive in two ways. It derives from the examination of an “old” war and it investigates two arenas which have received almost no fundamental criticism: studies of war-to-peace transitions and studies of demobilization and reintegration of ex-combatants.²⁸ The critical analysis of peace-building literatures in this study of an “old” war resonates with many of the general objections raised by those who study “new” wars. Both concur that peace-building discourse conceals the politics and history of wars and also the agendas of international actors and/or scholars and practitioners who participate in the peace-building discourse.²⁹ However, the specifics of the critique differ. How peace-building studies rely on subjective and arbitrary criteria for evaluations of success and how this predisposes them to miss important dimensions of politics is demonstrated for both studies of transitions and studies of programs to demobilize and reintegrate ex-combatants.

*Studies of transitions**Subjective, arbitrary, and externally imposed evaluative criteria*

Analysts use a variety of criteria to measure the success of transitions. These subjective and arbitrary criteria cannot provide consistent measures and they impose external peace-building agendas on domestic actors. A common measure of a successful transition is the end of the war. This measure is itself subject to different criteria – ending multiple sovereignty and/or reducing the number of battle deaths. When analysts specify the maximum number of battle deaths that are permitted for a transition to be considered a success, their thresholds often differ as do the time periods over which they require these declines in battle deaths to prevail. Other measures include a successful negotiated settlement, compliance with “free and fair” elections, or full compliance with all the settlement provisions. Some criteria of success are more demanding and require democratization that goes beyond merely “free and fair” elections. As shown below, the application of each measure requires analysts to make further subjective interventions. Given the subjectivity of the exercise, it is miraculous that there is ever agreement on which transitions have been successful. In this regard, the Zimbabwe case is intriguing: it has been almost universally hailed a success.

Analysts who agree to measure the success of a transition by when a war ends often differ on what criteria to use. For Roy Licklider a civil war ends, whether through negotiated settlement or military victory, when one of two criteria is met. There must be either an end to multiple sovereignty or fewer than 1,000 battle deaths in each of five consecutive years.³⁰ Following Charles Tilly, Licklider defines multiple sovereignty as the population of an area obeying more than one institution. Licklider quotes Tilly: “They pay taxes [to the opposition], provide men to its armies, feed its functionaries, honor its symbols, give time to its service, or yield other resources despite the prohibitions of a still-existing government they formerly obeyed.”³¹ Because it is possible that the battle deaths may stem from a different war, Licklider distinguishes between ongoing wars which have the same sides and issues and wars with different sides or issues.³² Michael Doyle and Nicholas Sambanis use different criteria for identifying when a war ends. They specify a lenient measure of peace-building following civil wars, whether they end in negotiated or imposed settlements: “an end to the war and to residual lower-level violence and uncontested sovereignty” for two years.³³ Leaving aside the different battle death numbers which they require for a conflict to be labeled a civil war and hence for a war to end,³⁴ their criteria differ from Licklider’s in the two years for reduced violence (rather than five years), and the necessity that multiple sovereignty end (rather than be an alternative measure of a war’s end). Like Licklider, Doyle and Sambanis also must decide when battle deaths are part of an ongoing or new war.

Our rule of thumb for coding separate war events was the following: If a war ended in a peace settlement and then restarted after a period of peace, we coded a separate war event . . . Other rules of thumb for coding separate war events were the following: If a different war started while a previous war was ongoing in the same country, we coded separate war events (e.g. the Tigrean and Eritrean wars in Ethiopia). If the parties and issues to a war changed dramatically during an ongoing conflict, we coded a separate war events [*sic*] (e.g. the Afghan war before and after Taliban). We collapsed two or more war events in other data sets in a single observation if the parties and the issues were the same; if less than 2 years or other substantial period of peace intervened between the first and second event; if large-scale fighting continued during the intervening period, and if the case-study literature treats those wars as a single war.³⁵

Analysts also provide different criteria for when negotiated settlements of civil wars can be said to effect a successful transition. For Walter, removing multiple competing armies to end the war is “one of the main objectives of any peace treaty.”³⁶ As she puts it: “The key difference between interstate and civil war negotiations is that adversaries in a civil war cannot retain separate, independent armed forces if they agree to settle their differences.”³⁷ Thus she differs from Licklider, for whom eliminating multiple sovereignty is not essential for a war to end. Walter offers three criteria for successful negotiated settlements.

First, a treaty had to be jointly drafted by all combatants through give-and-take bargaining . . . Second, the agreement had to keep the opposition intact as a bargaining entity. Third, it had to end the war for at least five years. If a formal peace treaty was signed but broke down within this time period, it was considered a failed attempt . . .³⁸

Walter codes a war as having experienced negotiations “if both sides had enough bargaining power to elicit important concessions from each other, if factions actually held face-to-face talks, if issues relevant to resolving the war were discussed, and if talks appeared to be undertaken in good faith.”³⁹

Fen Hampson’s measures for a successful negotiated settlement have similarities and differences: “in the short term, if societies are to make this transition [from war to peace], the key considerations are these: Did civil strife and violence end? And did the parties fulfill the commitments they agreed to under the settlement?”⁴⁰ Like Walter, Hampson seems to believe that it is important for the parties to an agreement to have face-to-face talks. He asserts: “it is absolutely essential that all the warring parties have a seat at the negotiating table and are directly involved in discussions about the new constitutional and political order that will be created after the fighting stops.”⁴¹ Establishing whether parties comply with a settlement is itself obviously subjective. For example, some analysts evaluate the Truth Commission in El Salvador as a failure,⁴² while others consider it to have been a success.⁴³ Hampson evaluates El Salvador’s negotiated settlement as a success because the violations were not serious enough to upset the peace process or to undermine the elections.⁴⁴

Compliance with settlement provisions to hold “free and fair” elections is a common measure of successful transitions. The evidence does not support

either Samuel Huntington's claim that free and fair elections provide "a single, relatively clear . . . criterion" of democracy⁴⁵ or Gisela Geisler's belief that one can establish clear standards of free and fair elections to enable international observer election teams to avoid subjective and inconsistent evaluations.⁴⁶ Where most others have seen democratic transitions in the 1980s, an analyst argues that few third world countries actually meet the conditions for liberal democracy because of violence and official restrictions on participation and representation in elections.⁴⁷ Some judge the UN-supervised Cambodian elections of 1993 to have been a triumph and the mark of a successful transition.⁴⁸ Others point to factors that undermined "free and fair" elections.⁴⁹ It has recently been suggested that "free and fair" elections set too high a standard for democracy in the inauspicious context of implementing peace accords, that a better standard would be the promotion of reconciliation among the warring parties, and that its measure of success be the contenders' acceptance of the election result.⁵⁰

Some analysts use more demanding measures of peace-building than ending a war, a successful negotiated settlement, or compliance with some or all settlement provisions. Doyle and Sambanis propose a stricter peace-building measure which requires a minimum standard of democratization for two years. It is also the measure they prefer "because it reflects a higher order of peace but requires only a minimum standard of political openness."⁵¹ Pauline Baker criticizes conflict management which makes ending the war a priority and proposes criteria for success which parallel the distinction Doyle and Sambanis make between lenient and strict peace-building. According to Baker, since the end of the Cold War, "peace is no longer acceptable on any terms; it is intimately linked with the notion of justice. Conflict resolution is not measured simply by the absence of bloodshed; it is assessed by the moral quality of the outcome."⁵² This includes "the need to bring human rights abusers to justice, establish political legitimacy, establish the rule of law, and build new state structures that can earn the confidence and trust of the people."⁵³ Fen Hampson makes a similar distinction. Though he uses a lenient measure of a successful transition, he remarks that for a peace settlement to be durable, institutions and support structures must be put in place so that the parties are discouraged from taking up arms again. "The ultimate success of the peace-building process in situations of civil conflict is thus directly related to a society's ability to make an effective transition from a state of war to a state of peace marked by the restoration of civil order, the reemergence of civil society, and the establishment of participatory political institutions."⁵⁴

There is nothing novel in the claim that evaluative criteria are subjective and arbitrary, though war termination analysts often hide behind appeals to the "consensus of experts."⁵⁵ Some war termination scholars draw attention to the subjective standards used to evaluate transitions without critiquing the orientation of war termination studies toward evaluation in terms of externally

imposed criteria. A student of war termination⁵⁶ alerts readers to the subjective and arbitrary nature of what counts as a civil war and when it can be said to have ended. Moreover, he warns of the pitfalls of using battle-death counts to determine when a war ends. However, his point is that subjective criteria vitiate against any single formula for war termination. Similarly, the introduction to *Keeping the Peace* provides an excellent overview of the range of criteria to evaluate transitions. Perhaps reflecting the belief among many war termination scholars that they are engaged in objective evaluation, the study of peacekeeping in El Salvador and Cambodia reports as a major finding the existence of multiple standards of evaluation:

the very concept of success and failure is ambiguous in these complex operations. It can signify the successful implementation of the mandate detailed in the initial Secretary-General's report. It could also mean the successful implementation of the peace agreement which . . . may not be identical to . . . the mandate the Secretariat drafted. Success can also be measured against the fundamental purposes – long-term peace, democratization, human rights, the rule of law, social and economic development – which may be reflected in the peace agreement. But even if those principles are not specifically reflected in the treaty, there are underlying purposes of the United Nations itself that should govern the actions of the peacekeepers . . . And lastly, success may be measured against much more pragmatic standards: did the peace operation reduce the pre-existing level of violence, promote a modicum of stable centralizing government, permit citizens to return to something resembling their pre-war lives? Sometimes, achieving success along one measure may require bending another. We will try to be clear as we discuss success and failure in each instance, but we aware [*sic*] that there is more than one standard against which these difficult operations should be measured.⁵⁷

As is evident, the study endorses the variety of standards and does not find the subjective nature of peacekeeping evaluations reason to question their merit.

Leaving aside the many interpretive issues which scholars of success and failure must confront, it is noteworthy that some violate both their own criteria and seemingly indisputable facts. A few examples will suffice. Recall that Barbara Walter makes the removal of multiple sovereignty a prerequisite of a successful negotiated settlement and coded a war as having experienced negotiations if both sides had enough bargaining power to elicit important concessions from each other, if factions actually held face-to-face talks, if issues relevant to resolving the war were discussed, and if talks appeared to be undertaken in good faith. Zimbabwe's peace settlement did not meet many of these requirements, but it does not interfere with her judgment that the transition was a success. The Lancaster House settlement did not end multiple sovereignty and factions did not hold face-to-face talks. At the end of the war, the three major competing armies remained intact. Britain was thrust into the role of mediator during the negotiations because the factions refused to talk to each other.⁵⁸ Indeed, there is little in her analysis of the conditions for Zimbabwe's "success," and thus

her theory of credible commitment, that can withstand scrutiny. Contrary to her claims, the warring parties did not agree to any military power-sharing (let alone “extensive power-sharing”),⁵⁹ and Britain was not willing to use force to punish violators of the treaty.⁶⁰ Though Hampson, like Walter, makes face-to-face talks a requirement for a successful settlement, he does not allow SWAPO’s exclusion from the Geneva Accords of 1988 to interfere with his evaluation of the Namibian settlement as a success. Sometimes he alludes to SWAPO’s exclusion from the talks;⁶¹ mostly he overlooks their absence from the negotiations.⁶² Like Walter, he makes much of the importance of power-sharing in settlements. But the Cambodian settlement, contrary to his claim, did not provide for electoral power-sharing.⁶³ A final example comes from a recent study by Michael Doyle and Nicolas Sambanis. They identify two wars in Zimbabwe, one between 1972 and 1979 and one in 1984. At odds with almost all evaluations of the transition in 1980, these authors judge peace-building after Zimbabwe’s liberation war a failure and peace-building after the 1984 war a success. Yet they acknowledge that their coding for the two wars “differs from the guidelines” for lenient peace-building.⁶⁴ For example, the low level of violence and the return of sovereignty after the liberation war should lead them to evaluate the transition a success. Instead, they note: “After the end of the civil war, there was continued violence against civilians, both by the government and by the Rhodesians. We therefore code this as a PB [peace-building] failure. However, the remaining violence was small and the government was sovereign and normalization policies were implemented. By the country’s standards, therefore, this case should be judged as a PB success.”⁶⁵ Doyle and Sambanis do not explain why they disregard their own criteria in evaluating lenient peace-building. Equally disconcerting, contrary to their claim, the government was not sovereign for most of the first two years after the settlement but contended with three competing armies. The failure of some war termination authorities to apply their own criteria or establish conditions of success in accordance with what might be regarded as straightforward facts underscores the inconsistencies that bedevil studies of transition.

Suppressing actors’ power, politics, and history

Oriented toward evaluating success in terms of externally imposed criteria, studies of transition suppress power, politics, and history. Measuring success requires ignoring important dimensions of politics. By looking more closely at the implementation of measures of the end of war and of settlement compliance, it will become apparent how the act of measurement inevitably distorts and suppresses politics and history. In particular, transitions deemed “successful” privilege peace-building agendas over domestic actors’ war agendas, and foreclose ongoing inquiry into how settlements may be used as instruments to advance domestic actors’ war agendas or how the war past and the legacy of the

settlement may loom large in post-settlement politics. The divorce of these measures of success from the history and politics of wars and settlements must also jeopardize the validity of evaluations of transitions. The dichotomy between war and peace which underpins studies of transition can only be sustained by ignoring evidence.

Labeling wars by type and declaring when a war ends, two independent problems which affect evaluations of transitions, come together in the case of Zimbabwe and illustrate how evaluations inevitably simplify complex histories. Calling Zimbabwe's war of liberation in the 1970s a racial or identity war, at the crux of most evaluations of the country's transition as a success,⁶⁶ eclipses the struggle for power among African nationalists, including the two guerrilla parties. Atlas and Licklider's analysis illustrates the point. They depict the liberation struggle as a "black-white civil war" which ended through a negotiated settlement. They label a subsequent war (allegedly from 1983 to 1984) as "a black-on-black armed conflict between former civil war allies" who "had fought to bring Ian Smith's Rhodesia to an end."⁶⁷ Atlas and Licklider explain the outbreak of a new war between former war-time allies in psychological terms. During civil wars, the demonization of the other "helps hold allies together in their wartime coalition" but after a settlement, "the fundamental us/them dichotomy begins to break down, the cohesiveness of groups on either side dissipates, and disputes among allies who are now more cognitively aware of their differences and conflicting interests can easily result."⁶⁸ But Atlas and Licklider themselves refer to the war-time relationship between the two guerrilla parties and their leaders as lacking cohesion. "From the beginning, the two organizations differed 'over strategy, tactics, and purpose, which persisted into independence. Neither the common enemy nor the shared overall objective of liberation could bridge the divide.'"⁶⁹ That the two guerrilla movements failed to unite during the liberation war alone suggests that the war was always more complicated than a race-based war, and that it cannot be divorced from the subsequent "black-on-black" armed conflict.⁷⁰ Atlas and Licklider's evaluation of the transition in Zimbabwe as a success depends on ignoring their own evidence that the liberation war also involved struggles for political power among Africans. Omitting such historical complexities about the war must reduce the reliability of their evaluation of a successful transition in Zimbabwe. At the same time, declaring the transition a success forecloses examining how actors used the settlement to further their own war agendas and how those agendas and the settlement shaped post-war conflict.

Simplifying complex war histories enters the evaluative project that dominates war termination studies in other ways too. Some war termination scholars merely differentiate civil wars from interstate wars, thus downplaying significant differences among civil wars.⁷¹ Steven David is right to criticize studies of internal war for treating all internal wars as if they are alike, and thus of being too generalized. But he is wrong in his proposed solution. "Better to concentrate

on differentiating internal wars by type and seeing what kinds of contingent generalizations can be produced. Categorizing internal wars by origin is a good first start . . . Making these distinctions will be difficult and scholars will have to be scrupulous in applying objective criteria over the range of cases."⁷² Some war termination scholars, as already noted, do distinguish civil wars according to type.⁷³ They would do well to heed Chester Crocker's warning that labeling wars inevitably simplifies complex histories, and that even the purest cases of ethnic conflict conceal many other important factors.⁷⁴ The following example highlights how labeling wars obscures more than it reveals. When Licklider examines whether some types of wars are more amenable to negotiated settlements than others, he divides civil wars "rather crudely" into those primarily driven by ethnic-religious-identity issues and those "driven by other concerns (primarily socioeconomic)."⁷⁵ He identifies both Zimbabwe's liberation war and the Matabeleland war as identity wars,⁷⁶ just as he does in a later co-authored study comparing four settlements which dissolve in war. In this latter study, Atlas and Licklider contradict the classification of the Matabeleland conflict as an identity war when they acknowledge the importance of distributive issues.⁷⁷ All this demonstrates not only how arbitrary the distinction between identity and socioeconomic wars is and how inconsistent war termination scholars often are, but also how labeling wars requires suppressing politics and history.

When analysts assess compliance with select or all settlement provisions as a measure of successful transition, they subordinate the politics of settlement implementation to peace-building. Declaring adequate compliance inevitably requires privileging instances of actors' cooperation and consent (or at least the appearance thereof) over conflict. Some examples may be illustrative. Those who reject the view that the Cambodian elections were "free and fair" point to factors which positive assessments of the elections must suppress. In particular, the governing party refused to recognize its opponent's electoral victory and international pressures finally resulted in the two forming a coalition government.⁷⁸ Also, three major parties alleged that there had been electoral fraud, the Khmer Rouge boycotted the election, and citizens could not enjoy freedom of movement and freedom from fear.⁷⁹ Analysts of Zimbabwe's settlement who use compliance as a measure of success invariably highlight the holding of "adequately" free and fair elections and the fact that the ceasefire held, thereby overlooking widespread non-compliance with settlement terms by all parties: Mugabe's party's infiltration of thousands of guerrillas after the start of the ceasefire; his party's rampant violence and intimidation in the countryside during the election campaign by guerrillas who should have been in assembly places; the concealment of arms by both guerrilla parties; and Rhodesian regime force violence and intimidation.⁸⁰

Evaluations of compliance also often conceal the role of external actors' power and politics. Bertram acknowledges: "The claim that there are objective standards of human rights and of democracy to which all parties may be held

without prejudice may be ethically and theoretically compelling. But in the highly politicized context of creating or re-creating a state's institutions, it is politics and power that dictate who will interpret such standards and how."⁸¹ Similarly, Stedman highlights the politics of the Cambodian settlement being declared a success.

Akashi [UN secretary-general's special representative in Cambodia] believed that compliance on most of the dimensions of the peace process, including demobilization and disarmament, and human rights protection, was secondary to compliance with holding an election. The election became a "holy grail" for UNTAC; Akashi defined the mission's success solely on the basis of achieving it, and the myriad goals of UNTAC's mandate – promotion and protection of human rights, disarmament and demobilization, and administrative control during the transition – were made subservient to this quest. In the end, this even included rejecting a "strict adherence" to the results of the election; Akashi and UNTAC did not insist that the political outcome of the election accurately reflect the electoral outcome, for fear that it would undermine the triumph of holding the election.⁸²

Evaluating a transition as a success in terms of compliance means adopting a perspective of settlements as instruments of peace and disregarding how they may have been used as instruments to advance actors' war agendas. Acknowledging the difficulties of the task, Stephen Stedman counsels the UN to identify those warring actors who really threaten the peace, the spoilers, and to prevent them from undermining settlements.

The custodians of peace must constantly probe the intentions of warring parties: they must look for evidence that parties who sign peace agreements are sincere in their commitment to peace, and they must seek and make good use of intelligence about the warring parties' goals, strategies, and tactics. Custodians must also judge what is right or wrong, just or unjust, and fair or unfair in peace processes.⁸³

But the foregoing demonstrates that objective and politically neutral assessments of settlement compliance are chimerical.

In summary, evaluating success is an important part of studies of transitions. First, the measures of success are subjective, arbitrary, and impose peace-building agendas, thus compromising scholars' ability to make sound evaluations and capture actual outcomes. Second, because studies of transition evaluate peace-building in terms of externally imposed criteria, they neglect power, politics, and history and so diminish further the reliability of evaluations. The use of compliance and the end of a war as criteria of success plays a critical role in forcing analysts to submerge politics and history in their evaluations. It is difficult to accept an upbeat in-house disciplinary assessment that "there is lots of interesting work going on in a field which did not exist a few years ago."⁸⁴ Scholars of all disciplines need to liberate the study of transitions from its evaluative straitjacket and to generate new paradigms that encourage analysis

that is more grounded in the study of history and power. This study is not directly concerned with evaluating transitions. However, its findings suggest that evaluations of whether actors' agendas have shifted from war-making to peace-making should emerge from an open-ended examination of what actors do and say and from the resulting political outcomes rather than from imposing "peace-building" criteria.

Rather than seeking to evaluate the settlement as an instrument of peace, this study shows how domestic and external actors used the settlement to promote their own agendas. Ex-combatants and their party and military leaders are shown to have distinct though often overlapping agendas. Actors' violations of, as well as compliance with, settlement provisions provide insight into their agendas and strategies. The findings of the study also illuminate how the settlement itself changed the terrain of future political conflict and shaped the domestic actors' strategies and resources. Ex-combatants were born powerful at independence because the settlement left them armed and concentrated. The new leadership further empowered its own ex-guerrillas by making the war and their war contribution central to its legitimation, as it sought to build its own power which the settlement had curtailed severely. The ruling party's guerrilla war and its war veterans became important assets to the leadership. But the guerrilla veterans of the chief opposition party continued to constitute a threat to the leadership's quest for exclusive power. The struggle for power between the two guerrilla parties which had bedeviled efforts at a united effort against white minority rule during the liberation war persisted through the implementation of the settlement and shaped the first seven years of the post-war period. The bloodshed of these years cannot be divorced from the bloody fighting between the two guerrilla armies during the liberation struggle.

Studies of demobilization and reintegration programs

Subjective, arbitrary, and externally imposed evaluative criteria

Measures of reintegration include the achievement of stability and/or attainable project goals, the elimination of material and/or non-material differences between combatants and non-combatants, and the emergence of social stratification among ex-combatants. For demobilization, some measures include disarmament and disbandment while others focus solely on disbandment. These measures are clearly subjective, arbitrary, and impose analysts' preferences on domestic actors. Different measures of reintegration and demobilization may alter the evaluation of programs, underscoring the extent to which program evaluations are hostage to analysts' preferences. Moreover, analysts often apply these measures in ways that are inconsistent with their own criteria or evidence. For these reasons, evaluations of demobilization and reintegration lack utility.

The definition, goal, and sometimes also the measure of reintegration is generally the attainment of a stable, consensual society. Whether reintegration requires a return to an allegedly better past or movement toward a better future has been contentious. Some demobilization and reintegration program (DRP) studies, like some studies of refugees,⁸⁵ rightly object that reintegration implies the society to which ex-combatants and other displaced groups return has not changed or does not need to change. A report evaluating a program for ex-combatants in El Salvador complains that the Salvadoran government and USAID accept uncritically that pre-war society had been integrated. "The term 're-integration into the agrarian sector' is nothing more than an empty phrase. All that remains of this sector is the product of a series of disastrous agrarian policies that, since 1932, have had a collective impact that was quite possibly as great as the havoc of the civil war."⁸⁶ Similarly, a study of the social and economic integration of war-affected people in Namibia notes that reintegration

can be taken to imply that the social and economic environment to which people return has not changed since they left: it is the returnees who have changed and they who have to adapt back to what they find. In practice, whether the migrant has been away for a few weeks or many years, there will have been sufficient, sometimes intangible and invisible changes in physical and social environments so that both stayers and returnees have consciously to learn new ways to co-exist.⁸⁷

The Namibian study also criticizes the erroneous implication that there was once integration in "southern African dependencies and the coercively repressed societies they contained."⁸⁸ These objections to reintegration are analogous to criticisms of the terms "rehabilitation" and "reconstruction" of war-torn societies, both of which also imply the desirability of returning to pre-war conditions.⁸⁹ To allow for change in the society and the returning group, critics prefer the term "integration." Similarly, critics of "rehabilitation" and "reconstruction" of war-torn societies posit that the goals should be reform and construction.⁹⁰

Despite these criticisms, the concept and often the measure of (re)integration retains the core ideas of stability and consent. The study of reintegration of war-affected people in Namibia in 1993, referred to above, defines reintegration in terms of states' desire for a self-regulating social stability.

In post-war society, the rural poor, for example, do not see their daily struggle as part of an integrating process. To the state, however, their unaided success in this as individuals, families and communities, even to levels which keep them among the most marginal of social categories, is taken as evidence that something called integration is being achieved. In this, it can be said that there is integration when, regardless of social status, people work through their lives with sufficient tolerance of each other to contain differences as they arise, without a general collapse of social order.⁹¹

In a 1997 article on integration in Namibia, the same author again makes stability the chief goal and measure of integration,⁹² though it now depends critically on

government intervention.⁹³ William Zartman understands political integration of ex-combatants to entail their inclusion in the political system which previously excluded them, the result being non-violent politics and stability.⁹⁴ For the World Bank, economic reintegration “implies the financial independence of an ex-combatant’s household through productive and gainful employment.”⁹⁵ Recognizing that this goal, even in a favorable macroeconomic environment, may be unattainable, the Bank proposes a lesser goal for reintegration that requires not the outright eradication of poverty among ex-combatants but merely the avoidance of strife, meeting the basic needs of the most vulnerable, and improving conditions for long-term progress.⁹⁶ A study of Eritrean reintegration endorses the desirability of measuring success in terms of a project’s realizable objectives and rejects measuring achievement in terms of whether programs fulfill the aspirations of their beneficiaries. “It is the inclination of people to aspire to more than they have, making it difficult to measure achievement in terms of feelings expressed. Results will inevitably be disappointing unless aspirations are realistic. It is more appropriate to gauge achievements in terms of a project’s realizable objectives.”⁹⁷ Stability, non-violence, consent, and avoidance of strife all have prominence in these concepts (and sometimes also measures) of reintegration.

A common measure of the success of reintegration is the elimination of differences between ex-combatants and non-combatants. Reintegration programs tend to focus on ironing out material distinctions between ex-soldiers and non-combatants. To evaluate ex-soldiers’ reintegration in Ethiopia, a recent study asks: “to what extent are they [ex-soldiers] similar or dissimilar to the rest of the population. [*sic*] . . . Do they have a similar standard of living? Do they have access to similar resources and assets? What support did they get to help their reintegration?”⁹⁸ A study of reintegration of ex-combatants in Mozambique uses a similar measure of reintegration: “reintegration is considered to be complete when fundamental factors distinguishing ex-combatants from other members of their communities cease to exist. Consequently, an assessment of the current state of reintegration, more than evaluating eventual results of reintegration programmes, has to be based on contrasting local communities and their ex-combatants.”⁹⁹ This is perhaps the most popular measure and one to which international agencies often subscribe.¹⁰⁰ Rather than measuring integration in terms of closing material gaps between ex-combatants and non-combatants, the narrowing of non-material differences may also be part of the measure of integration. A study of Namibian ex-combatants’ integration refers to the containment of gender, political, and ethnic differences in the army and police as an indicator of successful reintegration.¹⁰¹

Still others prefer to measure the success of integration in terms of widening wealth differentials and the fulfillment of ex-combatants’ expectations rather than basic needs. The authors of a study of ex-combatant integration in

Mozambique directly take on those who define and measure reintegration in terms of reducing visible difference between the demobilized and non-combatants among whom they live.¹⁰² First, they say it is difficult to identify a social norm against which to measure the relative integration of the demobilized since the recent decades of war in Mozambique have resulted in such widespread dislocation and accompanying changes in demographic profile and patterns of livelihood. Second, they object to the focus on removing material differences because it excludes

other important differences which relate to the demobilised's experience and are relevant to their sense of being "reintegrated". These include a deeply felt need for compensation for the direct suffering they experienced during the war as well as for the opportunity cost of being involved in it, and a need for non-discriminatory recognition by the government in the form of pensions and other benefits. In this sense, the demobilised do not want "reintegration" if that means going back to the *status quo ante*.¹⁰³

Third, they draw on literature on relocation which suggests that absence of difference may indicate lack of integration and which sees widening wealth differentials, growing social stratification, and the emergence of a class structure as an indicator of reintegration.

The measure of demobilization also varies, depending on whether it is defined to include disarmament. Demobilization is often understood as a process "by which the armed forces (government and/or opposition or factional forces such as guerrilla armies) either downsize or completely disband."¹⁰⁴ At the individual level, demobilization refers to "the process of releasing combatants from a mobilised state."¹⁰⁵ Another understanding of demobilization includes the assembly and disarmament of combatants: "Combatants are in the process of demobilizing when they have reported to an assembly area or camp, have surrendered their weapons and uniforms, but are awaiting final discharge."¹⁰⁶

Different measures may produce divergent evaluations, underscoring how much assessments of success are hostage to analysts' preferences. Two studies of reintegration in Mozambique in 1997 illustrate how different measures of reintegration may produce different evaluations. Where reintegration was measured by a shrinking difference between the problems of former combatants and non-combatants, reintegration was found to be successful.¹⁰⁷ Where reintegration was measured by the government's responsiveness to the demands of ex-combatants for compensation in the form of pensions, ex-combatants were found to be a threat to future stability.¹⁰⁸ When demobilization is understood to include disarmament, Borges Coelho and Vines find the UN-supervised demobilization in Mozambique to be a success.¹⁰⁹ A few years later, Vines defines demobilization as distinct from disarmament, and declares disarmament during the Mozambican settlement a failure. In particular, he criticizes the UN mandate

for not distinguishing between disarmament and demobilization, for not spelling out what disarmament should entail, and for not providing criteria for the success of disarmament. He implies his preferred criteria. "For ONUMOZ to have disarmed all armed individuals would have been an impossible task, but the weapons it did obtain and which were earmarked for decommissioning could have been destroyed."¹¹⁰

Analysts' criteria are often contradictory and shifting, and they do not always apply their criteria in ways that are consistent with their evidence. In the above-mentioned studies of Namibia, measures of integration include self-sustaining stability,¹¹¹ government strategies to contain differences,¹¹² and the need to take into account the expectations of ex-combatants for compensation and recognition of their war services¹¹³ which would surely create differences. Insofar as containment of differences is the measure of success, the author finds evidence for it within the army and the police, but refers to division being created between the guerrilla veterans in the security forces and their former colleagues outside the army and police.¹¹⁴ First, it is unclear that the differences in the security forces are being contained as opposed to being eliminated through resignations of those whose grievances remain unaddressed, such as women veterans and former members of the South African forces.¹¹⁵ Second, while containment of differences seems to be the initial measure of successful integration and necessary for stability, the conclusion suggests that stability actually depends on the government maintaining status differences between ex-combatants inside and outside the security forces.

The encouragement given to those within the forces of law and order to disassociate themselves from former colleagues excluded from them, including those participating in the containment schemes, confirms the intentionality of the process of status differentiation between the two groups. Ultimately, it ensures that the former will restrain the latter, as and when it becomes necessary, so as to keep the peace.¹¹⁶

Those who advocate that measures of reintegration ought to take into account how ex-combatants' war experiences have shaped their expectations fail to acknowledge how ambiguous their evidence is on the legacy of the war for ex-combatant aspirations. Dolan and Shafer impute the following desires to Mozambican ex-combatants: "They want to be part of a wider process of reconstruction in a way which reflects their personal transformation, justifies their losses, and acknowledges their role in bringing about democracy."¹¹⁷ The demobilized feel that they are owed compensation in the form of pensions and employment opportunities, the latter indicating "a desire to work for a living, not a desire to be paid off and sit idle."¹¹⁸ Yet other evidence suggests serious limits on the extent to which the demobilized want the opportunity to work and contribute to reconstruction and democracy. We learn that they desire formal employment, not for the salary which is too low to provide a living

wage but for “opportunities to generate extra income, whether through bribetaking or the use of company resources. It is these opportunities rather than the salary itself which make formal employment so attractive.”¹¹⁹ Also, ex-combatants are often loath to accept minimum wage employment, especially where such work “injures his dignity and view of himself.”¹²⁰ There is a similar ambiguity about how war experiences have shaped ex-combatants’ ideas about integration in the 1997 Namibian study, insofar as the study recommends that the government heed ex-combatants’ expectations. Ex-combatants who fought for SWAPO “expected deferred compensation, in terms of work and housing, for the contribution they had made to Namibia’s independence. They looked to the state to provide it.”¹²¹ Frustrated veterans also make demands for government assistance “to realise their potential and contribute usefully to reconstruction.”¹²² However, not only the government but also the veterans emerge as uninterested in training which might enable veterans to make a contribution. In the new army, SWAPO veterans displayed “a pervasive reluctance” to train, and those who joined Development Brigades had little interest in “self-initiated project development” but “expected the government to assume indefinite responsibility for their welfare and employment.”¹²³ In these studies of Namibia and Mozambique, ex-combatants talk about wanting to participate in reconstruction but their behavior suggests a strong sense of entitlement.

Suppressing politics, power, and history

The measures of reintegration and demobilization, and indeed the very notion that DRPs are essential for peace-building,¹²⁴ necessarily ignore politics, power, and history in ways which further undermine the soundness of evaluations. More specifically, measures of reintegration and demobilization usually disregard domestic actors’ agendas, have scant regard for their political resources to achieve their goals, and are insensitive to how specific war histories and settlements may shape domestic actors’ agendas and resources. Taking different measures of successful DRPs, these shortcomings will be demonstrated.

The conception of reintegration and demobilization as essential for peace-building in studies of DRPs conceals the post-Cold War ideology of international agencies. It is reasonable for governments and ex-combatants who do not seek to threaten peace to oppose demobilization. Governments may fear that demobilization itself will be a threat to peace. The federal government of Nigeria resisted demobilizing the vast numbers of men it had mobilized to fight a civil war because it claimed the country needed a large army to deter future threats to its sovereignty and survival and allegedly saw the demobilization of large numbers of soldiers who were unlikely to find alternative employment to be a political threat. From the government’s perspective, the political risks